

At the Bar of Public Opinion

A Brief for Public Relations

By

John Price Jones

and

David McLaren Church

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by

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and

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The John Price Jones Corporation

with a Foreword by

GUY EMERSON

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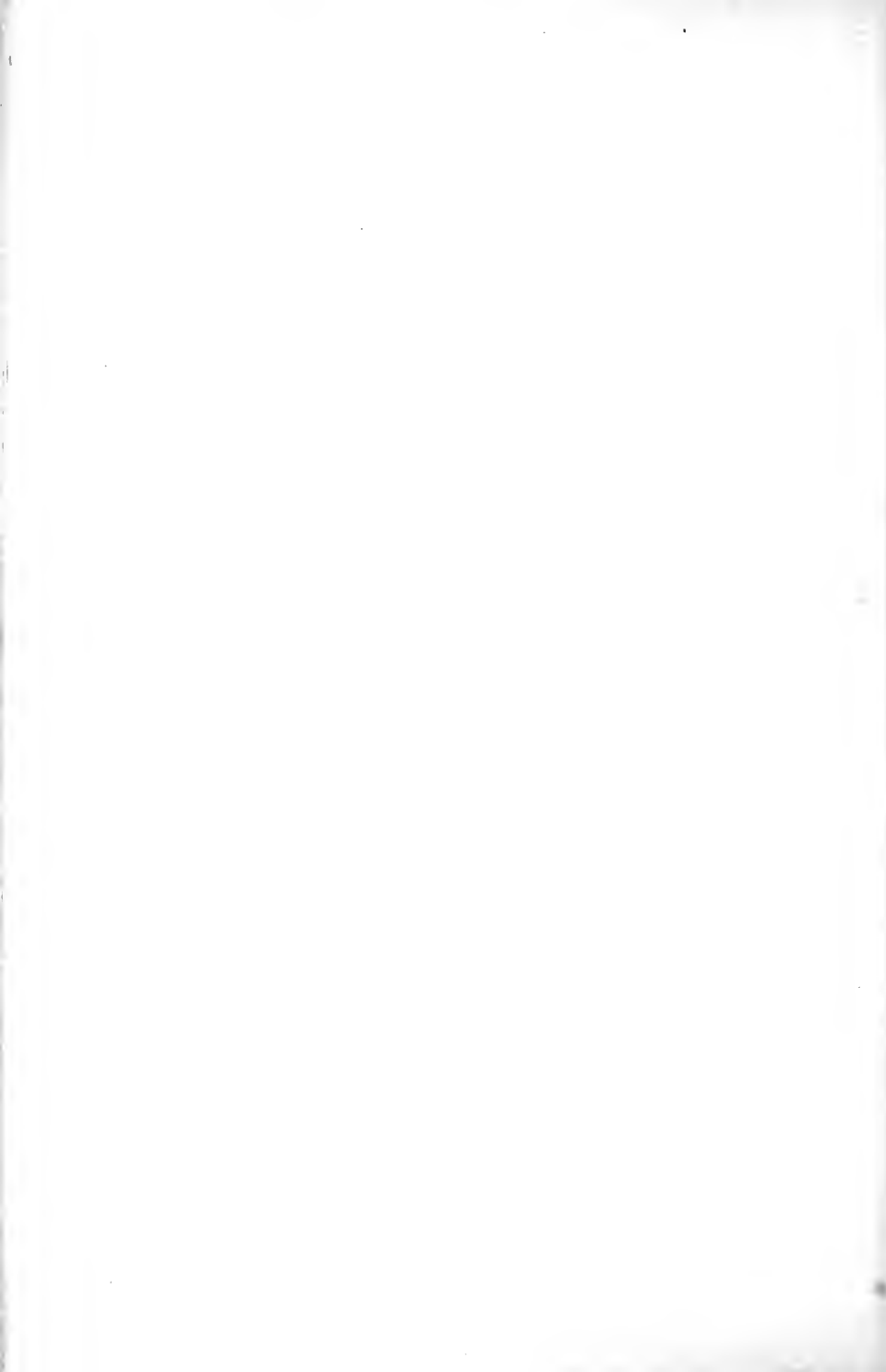


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TO THE STAFF

whose thought and earnest work
have made this material possible.



FOREWORD

THIS book is based on the assumption that "public relations" signifies something of vital importance in the world today. Its purpose is to define public relations in a way which will bring out the significance of the phrase, particularly in its relation to the problem of the modern business executive.

The authors are conscious of the fact that no final definition can ever be achieved, because in its essence public relations means the inter-relation between public groups; and these groups are made up of human beings living in a complex and rapidly changing social environment. Obviously

such relationships are endlessly varied and impossible to imprison in rigid formulas.

However, as a working basis, the authors approach public relations as meaning two things. First, for any given business executive it signifies the theory and practice of establishing, as between his organization and the public, a full and honest understanding of the facts of his business and the public significance of those facts. Second, an important element in public relations, which is perhaps most often neglected, is the responsibility which it implies for rigid self-analysis on the part of business and basic adjustment and modification of facts and of viewpoints when necessary. For only in this way can unfavorable public opinion be permanently corrected.

Unfortunately some business men have regarded public relations as the use or abuse

of the machinery of publicity to “influence” public opinion. They have felt that they could hire the great forces of publicity—advertising, the news columns, and the radio—to cover up organic defects in a corporate structure or its product. This book starts with the premise that any modern business man who has a proper sense of public relations knows he cannot fool the public, and does not seek to do so. The book attempts to search out the fundamentals of a permanently effective and wholly honest public relations policy which any business executive can understand and apply to his own problem.

The authors have been engaged for most of their business lifetime in dealing with the machinery of public relations. Their chief work has been along publicity lines and in the kind of analysis of the public mind

which is called for in public relations programs for business organizations and in the great national field of fund-raising. Obviously when it comes to raising money from a group of people, the first thing called for is to understand quite fully the psychological reactions of those people.

For many years Mr. Jones, Mr. Church, and their associates of The John Price Jones Corporation have been deeply interested in the rising tide of thought and discussion which has grown up under the general term public relations, and as a first step toward clarifying their own thoughts they made a search of the literature on the subject. They believe it is literally true that there is in English today no adequate book on the subject. Some thoughtful writing has been done; but in the literature of public relations there are almost as many opinions as there are authors.

Perhaps the explanation is that events have moved so rapidly during the past few years that the literature has not caught up to the actual practice. For in the American way of trial-and-error great progress has been made in this field during the past decade. Many corporations in this country today are practical laboratories of sound public relations. But it is fair to say that they are still in the minority.

There is attempted here no final definition of public relations nor is there set forth the last word in the application of this definition to modern practice. The authors believe, however, that this book is perhaps the first scientific attempt which has been made to tear away the superficial tinsel from the subject, to bring to it a measure of simple definition and direction, to lay it out on the table for objective study.

If they have succeeded in any measure they should be deeply gratified, because an understanding of the power and opportunity latent in sound public relations policy and practice will not only help to recreate a prosperous America, but will go far towards strengthening the fundamentals upon which democracy itself must rest. For only if democracies prosper, only if practical ways and means are found for all groups of our people to work in harmony, can democracies hope to endure in the face of the forces which threaten their existence today.

GUY EMERSON.

INTRODUCTION

THIS book deals with public relations, a subject of interest to every business man and executive.

Public relations, as a term, has been given many meanings, and seized upon to give character to a wide range of activities which are *not* public relations. It has been employed to describe press agency, publicity, promotion, and propaganda. It is none of these. Sound public relations can be the foundation on which, with the tools of publicity and promotion, a business can be developed and made more prosperous. In fact, there can be no lasting value in publicity

unless it is built on a basis of sound public relations.

In this book we endeavor to study the elements which create public relations. We consider the conflict of ideas and the advocacy of ideas which help make opinion. We consider human conduct—word or deed—which affects others, as a source of public relations. We consider the relation between human conduct and opinion, and the constant change that goes on in that relationship. Out of these considerations, we reach a definition of public relations, and seek to show the place public relations holds in personal and corporate conduct today.

Since public opinion is shown as one of the two major forces in the creation of public relations, we consider public opinion, the means for measuring it, sources from which it may arise, and methods in meeting it.

Finally, we discuss the task of the public relations counsel, the principles by which he works, the tools which he employs, and the professional standards he must possess.

Paul W. Garrett of the General Motors Corporation has described public relations as "Industry's Number One Job." Whether or not this is over-statement, it is important that business, business men, and executives understand what public relations is, what its sources are, and what the task of the public relations counsel involves. It is to aid in this understanding that this book has been written in a time when there is much talk of the importance of public relations, but also much confusion on the subject.

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HUMAN CONDUCT

The Source of Public Relations

“When men differ in opinion, both sides ought equally to have the advantage of being heard by the public; when truth and error have fair play the former is always an overmatch for the latter.”

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN



I

CONFLICT IN IDEAS

FOUR centuries ago Savonarola, Italian monk and reformer, went to death by fire for doing what every American today considers his right—expressing his ideas.

Savonarola promoted conflict of ideas among the Florentines.

Civilization has advanced since Savonarola's time, but even today men languish in jails and concentration camps in Europe because their ideas are in conflict with those of the prevailing regime. History demonstrates, however, that where there is suppression of conflict of ideas, there is either a dead nation or one without liberty.

Conflict of ideas flourishes in America. One meets with more conflicting ideas in one day now than he would have in a lifetime a century ago. Radio, newspapers, magazines, advertising, huge communities, high speeds of travel—all constantly and rapidly shape individual and mass opinion and give expression to dissatisfaction with things that are.

One group arises with demands, some of which are obviously just and some seemingly unreasonable—another group outlines wrongs and insists upon reforms, part of which again appears reasonable and part harmful. Attacks on classes and professions, complaints of business methods, demands of unions, are made with loud outcries of injured justice and sometimes followed by practices which may do more injury to the country than the wrongs they attack. All

this, in a sense, is a mass searching for ultimate truth, ultimate justice, ultimate good in human life. What seems like a hurtful and unnecessary conflict of ideas is often, in reality, only the natural and wholesome concomitant of free democracy seeking progress and improvement.

For fair judgment, conflicting ideas must be brought into the open for free discussion. They should be analyzed with regard to the worth of tested experience and their sources and motives. Assembled and explained at the bar of public opinion, conflicting ideas will be judged by the people. The public acumen will be sharpened. Eventually, public opinion will be so crystallized that through action of a majority of the people, new and higher standards will be established in legislation, in public morals and economic

methods. The change will be for the ultimate good of the greatest number.

But the mere existence of a conflict of ideas does not alone lead to spontaneous development of public opinion.

"Events," says Walter Lippmann, "do not take shape until somebody protests, or somebody investigates, or somebody publicly, in the etymological meaning of the word, makes an issue of them. . . ."

The nature and meaning of conflicting ideas must be presented adequately, at the bar of public opinion.

II

THE NEED FOR ADVOCACY OF IDEAS

A STRING of beads and a blade, oxidized and crumbled, but undeniably of iron, found in an Egyptian pyramid convince archaeologists that iron was known and used as many as 5,000 years ago. Iron was probably discovered and re-discovered many times in the succeeding centuries, but it was not until a comparatively few centuries before Christ that iron came into wide enough use to influence man's life.

New forces in our present-day life are much as iron was until a few centuries before Christ. These forces exist, but until

someone digs them out and develops them, their values are unknown. Out of such development comes conflict in ideas.

In order that conflicting ideas may be properly brought before the people—before the bar of public opinion; in order that these ideas may be clearly defined and accented; that they may receive the consideration of people of all ages, sexes, and varying economic and intellectual levels; that they may be thoroughly discussed, analyzed; and that eventually the greatest good for the greatest number may be derived—a trained technique, based on experience in ethical presentation of ideas, is necessary.

Advocates of each conflicting idea are necessary; advocates who know how to visualize ideas, how to present those ideas in forms which may be readily understood by people of varying intellectual capacities.

Such advocates are needed to develop the fundamentally sound principles, which ideas must exemplify if they are to receive approval before the bar of public opinion.

Some may say the lawyer is the ideal advocate. Others may say politicians or candidates for office are the proper advocates.

But there are other advocates—the writer, the cartoonist, the speaker, the advertising expert. Finally, there is the public relations counsel who makes advocacy of ideas his sole profession—a profession which is less well understood than that of other advocates.

The title “public relations counsel” has been misused to describe the publicity man who grinds out newspaper releases in an endless stream from a mimeograph machine; it has been misused to describe the stunt man or “ballyhoo artist”; it has been

misused to describe the paid speaker making propaganda speeches; and it has been misused to describe the ordinary promotion man.

In order that we may have a clear understanding of the public relations counsellor as an advocate in the turmoil of clashing ideas, we must first have an understanding of public relations.

III

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND HUMAN CONDUCT

"PUBLIC relations" is not defined in any dictionary. Taking the separate words at their face value, the phrase broadly means relations with the public, but there is more to public relations than this.

One sage individual, seeking simplification, has said: "Good public relations is applied common sense."

There is much to that, but it should be borne in mind that it requires experience and judgment, if not technique, to judge what common sense is. Yesterday's "common sense" may be today's "bad judgment."

Many definitions have been offered for public relations, some of which we present here.

Paul W. Garrett, Director of Public Relations, General Motors Corporation, says:

“Public relations . . . is . . . a fundamental attitude of mind—a philosophy of management—which deliberately and with enlightened selfishness places the broad interest of the customer first in every decision affecting the operation of the business.”

Arthur W. Page, Vice-President, American Telephone and Telegraph Company, has stated:

“Public relations are designed to give a business a good reputation with the public, establish it in the public mind as an institu-

tion of character and an institution which functions in the public interest.”

A recent statement by McGraw-Hill Publications declared:

“Public relations is not a separate function of industry although its promotion is often delegated, quite properly to an able and responsible executive, or to competent outside counsel. We hold that it is not something which can be bought like a typewriter or suspended like an order for raw materials. It is a way of life—expressing itself every hour in attitude and actions affecting workers, customers, and the community. It requires a technique as well as an understanding—a technique which is only now being defined by experience.”

W. J. Cameron of The Ford Motor Company has written:

“The quality of a concern’s public relations may be gauged by its total effect on the community life. Is the community better off with the industry than it would be without it? . . . It is . . . something done and built into the fabric of social life.”

Though these definitions may fail to give a tangible and clear-cut description of public relations, a common philosophy runs through all of them. Perhaps all will agree that the basic law of public relations was laid down by the Apostle Matthew when he said:

“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them. . . .”

St. Matthew's Golden Rule is still a sound basis of public relations, as it is understood today, having to do primarily with the way in which individuals or institutions comport themselves with respect to other individuals, institutions, groups, or the public as a whole.

In the ages when it was every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost, little or no attention was paid to public relations. Then man began to realize the values of favorable public opinion. He began to see that favorable opinion depended on how he conducted himself with his fellows. Effort was made to lessen friction, to establish favorable opinion with individuals or groups with whom there was frequent contact.

Early endeavors toward the creation of favorable opinion were limited to individuals or groups where the advantage of such

opinion was readily recognizable, such as customers or prospective customers. Later came the recognition that whenever there is a deed or word which involves the relationship of two or more individuals there is a situation which may be affected by public opinion, and whether that opinion is good, bad or indifferent, depends on whether the deed or word measures up to the prevailing concept of rightful human conduct.

Therefore, we may define public relations as the words and deeds, of an individual or a group, judged by the common concept of sound human conduct.

Since the human conduct may be that of a group of individuals or of an individual, we have group or corporate public relations and personal public relations.

IV

PERSONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS

“My public” is a phrase most frequently used by theatrical stars.

Every one of us, however, has a public. Therefore, every individual has public relations.

Personal public relations begins within the family circle. The respected head of a strong family circle usually has a flying start toward generally sound personal public relations, which extends to a fairly wide and varied public.

An individual has a business public con-

sisting of those with whom he does business. This may include his customers, his fellow workers, his competitors or those from whom he buys.

There is also a social public for every individual. His public here consists of friends, and all those in any social group with which he has any contact.

Then there is usually a political public for each individual. That may consist of political associations, either close or remote.

In each of these publics there are certain standards of conduct, certain codes one is expected to follow in that given circle.

An individual's public relations may be accepted as good or bad, depending upon the manner in which he acts and the manner in which he influences his associates, or the general public to think of him.

The business man who violates the cus-

toms of his own business circle creates adverse personal public relations in that circle.

The same individual may be a gracious and courteous host and guest, creating good personal public relations with his social public.

In his political circle, the individual may violate a code by indifference at a time of party crisis, resulting in unfavorable personal public relations with his political public.

Each of these varying codes may have a bearing on an individual's conduct and reputation. Sound personal public relations, however, requires general conformation to standards commonly accepted by the public as a whole.

The standards and the codes in personal public relations change rapidly.

During the prohibition era, for instance,

the code of ethics in some social circles did not frown too severely on over-indulgence. Today, over-indulgence is considered bad manners and an indication of weakness of character.

Whether one wishes to strive for sound personal public relations by conforming to the codes existing in the various elements of his public is a matter for each individual to judge for himself.

Personal characteristics enter into personal public relations to a great degree. Sometimes unfortunate personal characteristics can be changed successfully, but nothing is more pitiable than camouflaged character when the paint of deception wears off.

Individuals may be guided in their personal public relations, but unless they are willing to conform to standards accepted by

the public generally, they will eventually find themselves out of public favor.

Personal public relations, and the standards by which they are measured, provide the basis for a discussion of group or corporate public relations.

SOME PRINCIPLES AFFECTING PERSONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS

No two problems in personal public relations are exactly similar. The procedure adopted by one man is never exactly suitable for another. An examination of the success of various men in dealing with their various publics yields certain principles which may be generally applied. A few of these we cite here.

1. Stay in character.
2. If you change, change gradually so as not to cause your public astonishment or questioning.
3. Avoid defensive positions.
4. Avoid the appearance of being superior.
5. Avoid publicity for publicity's sake.
6. Stand for something.

V

CORPORATE PUBLIC RELATIONS

“WHAT’s in a name?” asked Shakespeare.

Recently \$65,000 was paid for the name of a magazine. An automobile manufacturer paid \$100,000 for the name of an automobile.

The answer to Shakespeare’s question today is that the name, or good will of a business group, such as a corporation or association, has a tangible dollar value.

Good will of a corporation is synonymous with good public relations, now a recognized social and economic force.

Possibly because American methods of business have developed more rapidly along the line of group or corporate effort, this nation today is far advanced over any other in its appreciation of public relations as a factor in good will and profits.

Group public relations arises out of the human conduct—deeds or words—of a group of individuals, acting as a unit. In this area fall corporate public relations, institutional public relations, association public relations, and various forms of government public relations.

A corporation naturally has relations with its customers and with prospective customers. Also it has direct and constant relations with employees, and less direct and less frequent relations with stockholders, or any group of individuals who may be influenced to think well or ill of the corporation or its

products, thereby affecting effective operation and sales. But the corporation must also recognize it has relations with the general public, if its policies or products touch in any way the public life, or public welfare or legislation.

Corporations, like individuals, have standards and codes. These are not static, but are subject to constant change. For example, a great deal of business was done formerly on the basis of gratuities. Some purchasing agents in the last generation built up fortunes from gratuities they received from vendors, and such gratuities were frequently regarded as their prerogatives. Today such gratuities are considered highly unethical.

The evolutionary codes of ethics of corporations are the result of changes in the codes of individuals composing corporations. As higher standards of individual con-

duct are set, so there come higher standards of corporation conduct.

An individual, as a director of a corporation, is one of a group, each of whom may have distinct and definite ideas as to the principles which should govern the corporation's policies and acts of its officers and employees in their business relations with their public.

One director may set quality or service above price; another may view profit as the first consideration. Others may have varying points of view, with the result that the final policy established by the corporation may represent a composite of many ideas and perhaps a compromise. When corporations join together in associations and adopt policies of common conduct, the result may be still another step away from the policies which guide individual conduct. But the

important fact to be borne in mind is that each individual member of the public judges each corporate act from the point of view of individual or personal ethics or morals. Therefore, the nearer a corporate group fixes its policy of conduct upon the basis of the commonly accepted individual opinion of what is right and wrong, the nearer that corporation will come to maintaining the good will of the public and favor of its customers.

So we may conclude that in speaking of public relations—institutional or corporate—we are considering the composite conduct of groups of individuals within a corporation or an institution. The conduct of these individuals as members of a group may differ somewhat from their conduct as individuals in private life, but will conform to the accepted group attitudes.

Nevertheless, corporate policy is in essence an expression of individual conduct. The work, therefore, of persons who are guiding and advising in public relations deals fundamentally with problems of human conduct, human action, human thinking, human emotions.

The more the public relations counsel strives to develop corporate policies and conduct based on the highest ideals of generally accepted personal ethics, the greater his service to his client and the client's public, and the more easily the corporation's conduct will be understood by the man in the street. That understanding which is the goal of the public relations counsel is, however, a variable, for the elements of public relations are forever changing.

VI

THE FLOWING STREAM

“CHANGE doth unknit the tranquil spirit of man,” said Matthew Arnold.

There is nothing tranquil about those elements which create public relations.

Ideas change, as conflict between beliefs and opinion proceeds. Advocacy of ideas fluctuates in intensity, with consequent constant movement in ideas, and the opinion which results from the interchange of ideas.

Human conduct changes. Subjected to technological advances, varying economic pressures, social attitudes and other forces, human conduct is far from constant.

Since the opinion, which forms from

changing ideas, is in a state of constant flux and human conduct is likewise always in movement, it is natural to expect that the situation which arises out of human conduct and opinion—that is public relations—must be constantly changing.

Public relations results when we have human conduct—words, deeds or policies—measured in terms of opinion of the public or the group affected by the conduct. Therefore, we have public relations constantly changing.

The change in public relations may not always be immediate and it may not even be outwardly evident.

Human conduct goes on every minute of the day. For every act of human conduct there is a standard of measurement by opinion, and the human conduct may be good or evil according to the existing standards.

That means that every act of human conduct which affects others is measurable in terms of existing standards of opinion, even though the measurement may not be immediately applied.

Hence, we have public relations, like human conduct, and public opinion, flowing in a constant stream.

The public relations situation exists, whether it is active or not. Frequently public relations situations run on for great lengths of time without becoming active or urgent. Sometimes public relations situations may entirely escape being brought into activity, but like a smoldering fire they represent a potential force for good or for evil.

We have active public relations when human conduct is brought into active judgment by the existing standards of opinion as to what is rightful human conduct.

It is perhaps unfortunate that too often public relations gets no recognition until it enters the active or urgent state, and emergency remedies are sought.

The active or urgent state of public relations more often than not is the result of human conduct which has taken place some time in the past, but which was delayed in being brought into the light of public judgment.

If public relations is to be maintained on an even keel and kept in balance, there must be constant vigilance. Every word or deed which affects any other individual or group of individuals must be measured by the public standards of rightful conduct, even though the effects of the word or deed may not be presently evident to the public.

Public relations is like a river, as it flows constantly onward. It must always be kept in

the proper channel, or it will back up with constant dangers of damage in a wide area, particularly when corporate conduct is concerned.

VII

THE AREA OF CORPORATE CONDUCT TODAY

"THE corporation exists," said the professor peering over his glasses, "because it is of service to society. It will continue to exist only so long as it serves society."

He paused to let his words sink in.

"The basis of corporate conduct is not dividends or profits alone," he continued.

That was twenty years ago. The professor and his words were considered radical for the time.

Today most are agreed that the corporation, to be successful, must be built on some

idea of service and responsibilities to the public—a fact which immediately makes clear the importance of well considered public relations. Thus, we are led to the consideration of the public relations counsel's place in corporate activity, and every phase of that activity which touches the public or any part of the public.

The fact is unassailable that the achievements of American business have been an invaluable contribution, unparalleled anywhere in the world, to human welfare. The services rendered have far exceeded the importance of profits achieved. The story of what business has done for better standards of living has not even begun to be told.

The realization of this is now steadily, if slowly, displacing the older viewpoint in the thinking of American management. Lewis H. Brown, president of the Johns-Manville

Corporation, has expressed it when he recently said:

“Sometimes we forget that the sole purpose of business—its entire reason for existence—is service. Profits must not be the end of business but merely a measure of service that has been well rendered. The idea of service today requires, on the part of business men, a wider appreciation and understanding of the social responsibilities of business.”

Service and responsibility. These, as the records of many progressive American corporations will show, are by no means new concepts of management. Today, however, they are receiving new emphasis. Let us consider them as they furnish the foundation for corporate conduct.

If the primary basis of corporate conduct

is service, it is essential to define the fundamental idea of service behind the corporation, to isolate it with care and precision, to study the sometimes obscured principle of ultimate interest to mankind and to the general public, and beyond that to the many smaller, specific "publics" which, known or unknown, comprise the corporation's "audience."

From such a study will emerge what may be called the corporation's "case"—the fundamental idea that is behind the corporation and bigger than the corporation itself.

Having defined the idea or principle animating the corporation's existence and its sole reason for being, it is then necessary to measure the public's appreciation of it, and ascertain as well the public's attitude toward the corporation itself.

Although the basic corporate idea pre-

cedes the product or service, it is the product or service which the customer sees or uses. What he thinks of it, as well as what he thinks of the corporation itself and its basic idea, must also be ascertained. Only through constant alertness to public appreciation of product or service can any far-reaching corporate plans for future development and for sound corporate conduct be laid successfully.

With such widened appreciation of service as a primary force in corporate activity has come also recognition of a broadening area of responsibility.

Management—the group which directs the activities of a corporation, formulates the policies and frames the standards of conduct—in the past felt its chief responsibility to be toward the group which owned the corporation.

The history of corporate development led

naturally to this. Corporate management in the past, when it was not identical with ownership, was, prior to the wide distribution of stock ownership, usually in close relationship with it.

Today management in the broad sense is seen to have not one but six distinct, major responsibilities. Of great significance in this situation, with regard to corporate conduct, is the fact that the old responsibility of ownership is still uppermost in the public mind.

Corporate conduct, which is the constant study of the public relations counsel, must be based today upon an interpretation of the broader conception of corporate responsibility to the following groups:

CUSTOMERS. Management has the obligation to make clear its constant effort to improve both service and product and to offer

goods and services at fair and reasonable prices.

EMPLOYEES. Similarly, management must manifest the two-way responsibility existing between it and its employees. Management has a responsibility to its employees in regard to their rights to fair wages and working conditions. On the other hand, employees in return for these have a responsibility to management for good work and conduct.

One highly important element of corporate conduct is that of making it clear that there is a real community of interest and responsibility between labor and management—heretofore too often regarded as mutually antagonistic. Another important task, in fixing corporate conduct, is to refute the current conception that disagreements between

the two can be composed only by outside agencies such as the government.

Today we are in the midst of a keen discussion in which management must undertake to demonstrate, in all its relationships, public and otherwise, its readiness to act on the basis of justice to employees, to itself, to capital and to the public service.

CAPITAL. The remarkable and rapid changes in capital ownership in the past quarter century have created an entirely new problem for management in its responsibility to ownership. It is a responsibility no longer met simply by a recognition that ownership is entitled to a reasonable reward and nothing more.

A natural outgrowth of the multiplication of ownership in a single corporation from a comparatively small group to one

frequently numbering many thousands, has been to regard such ownership in the light of absentee landlordship. It has led to the creation of many problems and misunderstandings which will be solved only when ownership, no matter how diverse or widespread, is regarded again as an interested party, and corporate conduct adjusted on this basis.

THE PUBLIC. With the average citizen now quick to express his desires by means of the ballot, every institution must be keenly sensitive to the public demands of the day. No matter how big or how small, every corporation is giving a service which is being collectively judged by the people, and although a business policy is a group decision, every act of business is being judged by the people according to the standards of individual conduct.

The nearer, therefore, the group policy is to the accepted standards of individual conduct, the more readily is it understood and the more likely to be approved by the public. Thus it is important that management be alert to the trends of thought of the public, the voter, and the potential customer.

THE STATE. Management has also a responsibility to the State which is the creature of public will. It is today, to a greater degree than ever before, in partnership with the state.

The Government, in principle, is really exercising what its representatives consider a supervision based on the moral code of conduct of an individual. Legal aid is retained to make certain that a corporation observes every regulation laid down by Government.

But it must be pointed out that Govern-

ment supervision arises out of public demand which is, in turn, due to a large element of public opinion that business as a whole has not maintained the generally accepted standards of ethics.

Management which regards it a responsibility to keep attuned to the people's thinking will anticipate and adjust itself to public opinion, and by self-supervision lessen Government supervision.

INDUSTRY. Business today, in recognizing its broader responsibilities, has come to see that it is necessary not only to state its own case but also to support it in realistic dealings with the groups we have described above—stockholders, employees, customers, the public and the State. Business is finding that it is also a responsibility of each individual

concern to act for business and its own particular industry *as a whole*.

Bruce Barton stated this responsibility and its significance clearly when he said:

“If any manufacturer says ‘I do not care what the common mass of people think about my business, whether it be popular or unpopular with them,’—that man *is a liability to all industry*. No major industry has any moral right to allow itself to be unexplained, misunderstood or publicly distrusted; for by its unpopularity it poisons the pond in which we all must fish.”

Thus, to a widening group to which business is increasingly feeling its responsibilities, must be added the important responsibility of business to business and industry itself.

This then is the widened area of service and responsibility in which business and its management today must operate, and to which corporate conduct must be adjusted. In this process of adjustment the public relations counsel offers a service to corporations.

VIII

CORPORATE CONDUCT AND THE PUBLIC RELATIONS COUNSEL

THE day of the "big boss" has passed.

Every business continues to have its responsible head, but the sole arbiter who sits behind a desk and makes all of the decisions unaided is rapidly fading from the picture of successful business.

We find most business today, and corporate business in particular, organized as an army. The attack is planned and executed by specialists. There may be a general who gives the orders, but those orders are drawn

in a conference of specialists. Particularly in the field of corporate conduct, business finds specialized abilities necessary.

If corporate conduct is to be adjusted to the standards of human conduct, as it must if there is to be sound public relations, there is need for the specialist in public relations—the public relations counsel, who is equipped with specialized abilities in evaluating ideas, in watching public opinion and in acting as a prompting conscience for business.

Public relations counsel serves in testing public opinion concerning an institution's policies and acts, and makes recommendations as to policies and acts which will keep the corporation in line with popular desires. It serves by interpreting such policies and presenting them to the public in order to bring about understanding and acceptance.

Thus the public relations counsel has two distinct functions: to help management to formulate policies in line with the prevailing conception of service and responsibility; and to present those policies to the public.

The functions of public relations counsel are primarily those of an ethical mentor, interpreting for clients the ethical standards demanded by the public for the creation of lasting good will. By promoting standards to meet public desires, the public relations counsel creates a useful place for his services in the social and economic life of the day.

There are two sides to every question; revealed through discussion, argument, sometimes invective, and finally, decision through public opinion. The advocacy of one side by public relations counsel should be as in the role of a solicitor before the Court of Public Opinion. It should be on a plane

of dignity and reasonableness commensurate with the cause, and the service of the public relations counsel should be as open and evident as that of legal counsel.

Before the work of public relations counsel began to take form as a recognized technique, many newspapers sincerely questioned efforts by press agents and publicity men. Very few corporations employed them. Now, however, the public, the corporations and the newspapers realize that an honest publicity man helps both the corporation and the newspaper, and ultimately the public itself—by arranging a direct contact for the news reporter with the officer of the corporation who can answer questions.

We are now in a transition stage, similar to that which the publicity man passed through, where the value of public relations counsel is not understood by the public, only

slightly understood by the newspapers, and only in part by corporation management.

As the importance of public opinion is appreciated more by corporations, and there is more general acceptance of the values of testing public conscience and meeting it, the work of the public relations counsel will gain greater acceptance and understanding.

Having discussed in general terms the conflict of ideas which makes for democracy, the need for free discussion in the formation of public opinion, and the place that public relations counsel holds in bringing about adjustments in human conduct, we now turn to a more specific discussion.

The first duty of public relations counsel is to determine what public opinion is.

FACTS THAT ILLUMINATE

Wide search must be made for facts which may bear on public relations.

Some of the facts uncovered may be important, others may be less important—but the inquiry must be comprehensive.

From a questionnaire for management of one corporation, the following ten questions were picked at random.

What would be your answers to these questions:

How many members of your organization participate in civic affairs?

How many employees have been with your organization 10 years? 25 years?

Do you know what nickname your employees have for you?

Name one new development, in product or service, for which you know there is a strong and measurable public demand.

Have you ever accompanied one of your salesmen on his calls?

How frequently does your management establish contact by mail or otherwise with stockholders?

How many times in the past year have you been asked to speak before community groups and organizations?

How many times in the past year have you personally gone completely through your plant?

How many of the heads of leading charitable and philanthropic agencies in your community do you personally know?

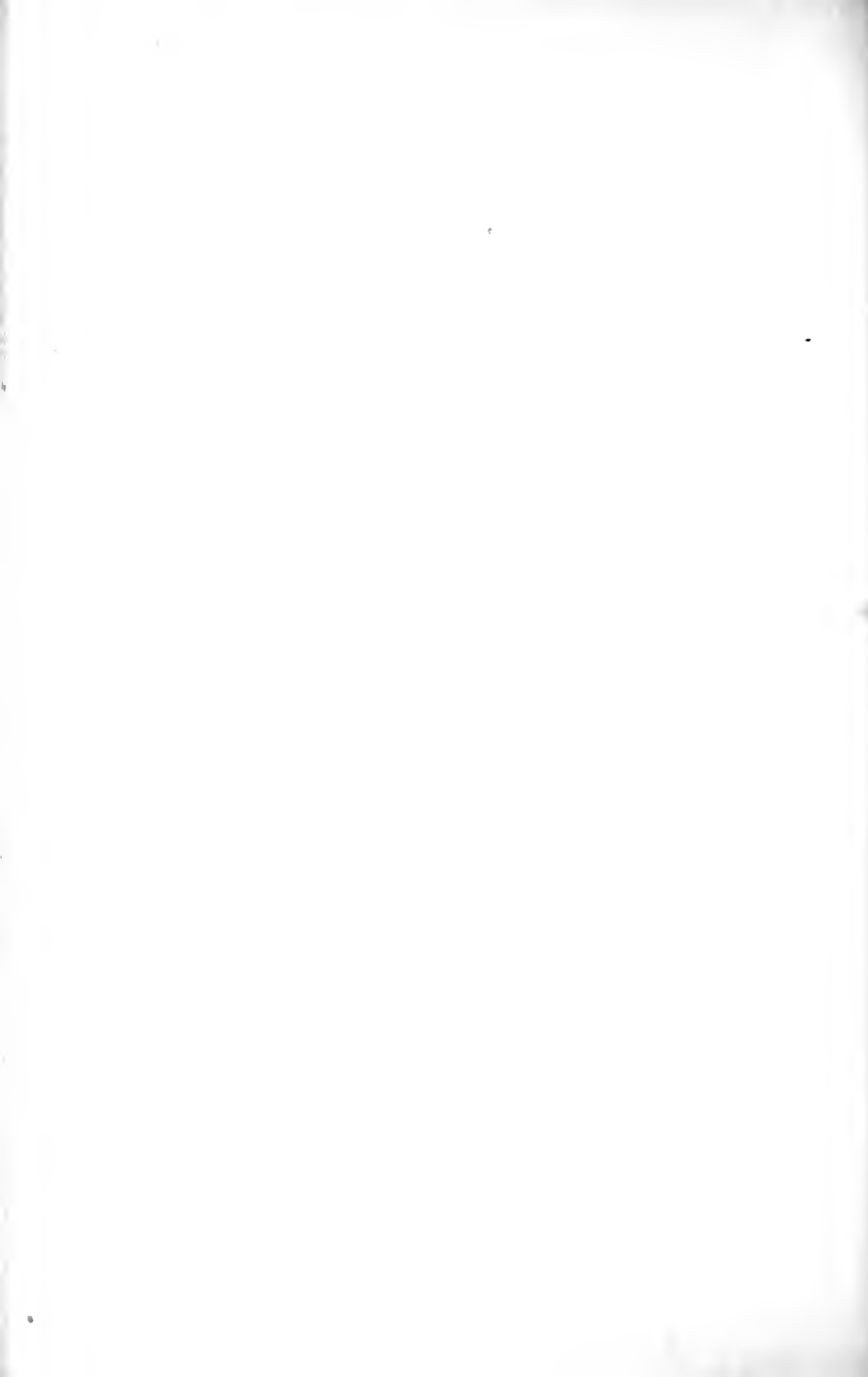
How many employees have "gotten past" your door recently and had a personal talk with you?

PUBLIC OPINION

The Force in Public Relations

"The pressure of public opinion is like the pressure of the atmosphere. You can't see it, but all the same it is sixteen pounds to the square inch."

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL



IX

PUBLIC OPINION

PUBLIC opinion is the raw product with which public relations counsel works.

Public opinion has been defined by A. Lawrence Lowell as "the algebraic sum or balance of individual opinions." It is no new factor in our social structure. It has existed ever since man developed the capacity to communicate an idea. Its imprint is found on every page of history. Public opinion forced Pilate's decree. It brought about the Boston Tea Party.

Tradition or routine long controlled group judgment. Men held to the beliefs

and judgments of their fathers. Change came slowly, and arose out of such time-consuming events as shifts in geographic boundaries, population trends, and technological advances.

“In the past the time-span of important change was considerably longer than that of a single human life,” Professor Alfred North Whitehead of Harvard has said. “But today this time-span is considerably shorter than that of human life, and accordingly our training must prepare individuals to face a novelty of conditions.”

Today, when we live in a flowing, shifting, changing life, group judgments vary widely in their stability. At the moment yesterday's world-wide demand for lasting peace appears to have given way to today's demand for preparedness. The trend toward dictatorship which Europe laughed off ten

years ago, has become a power over all European life. The public outrage over submarine sinkings of the last World War is set off against today's apathy over the bombing of defenseless civilians. Fads crop up overnight and disappear as quickly. Fashions sweep the world, to last a few short weeks.

No matter how shifting public opinion, it must be admitted that its force has increased proportionately as we have ascended the scale of civilization.

The free communication of ideas is a basic factor in the formation of free public opinion. Naturally, the tremendous strides in twentieth-century communication of ideas have broadened the scope and quickened the pace of public opinion and consequently of public relations.

Public relations counsel as it is today, attuned to current public opinion, would have

been impossible in the Grover Cleveland period, for ideas traveled more slowly then.

In 1890, for example, about four billion pieces of mail were handled by the United States Post Office; now the figure is over 22 billion pieces.

Whereas in the same year it is estimated that 60 million telegrams were handled over commercial land lines, now there are in the neighborhood of 195 million.

And completed telephone conversations have increased from 405 million to 27 billion annually.

The circulation of daily newspapers published here in 1888 was estimated at 4,500,000. Now our daily papers bring news, views and advertising to some 41,500,000 persons.

And book production has risen from 4,500 titles to 10,500 titles a year.

Marconi, pioneer in wireless telegraphy, was still a youth in 1890. Today, 700-odd transmitters broadcast to radio sets in 80 per cent of our homes.

These channels of communication, developed to their present advanced degree, are means by which public opinion forms rapidly today. There are many other channels, for psychologists tell us all of the senses may transmit opinion—but we have indicated sufficiently that present-day opinion is a flowing stream.

X

ELEMENTS OF PUBLIC OPINION

EVEN with its quickened pulse, and its ceaseless shifting, there are certain fairly predictable elements of public opinion.

✓ Individual opinion is subjected to many influences in its formation. The primary basis for individual opinion is what the individual accepts as facts, but the individual evaluates these facts in the light of personal and individual bias. Environment may have a biasing effect on facts. For instance, the facts presented by Neville Chamberlain on the Czechoslovakian situation probably were

not wholly accepted by such radio listeners in Germany as may have heard them.

Like environment, physiological aspects of the individual may also bias his opinion. The fat man is supposed to look on life with a lighter point of view than the lean man.

These and many other factors may bias individual opinion, and make it impossible to fix any infallible pattern for the individual opinions which go to make group or public opinion. There are certain elements, however, in the making of individual opinion which can be considered as basic to the making of public opinion.

Man is inherently selfish and gives his support to ideas which he believes will serve his interests first as an individual and second as a member of a group or section of the public. Thus, self-interest is a primary basic element of public opinion.

Community interest is, in fact, self-interest, but few of us like to regard it as such. We prefer to consider our community interests as generous evidences of civic consciousness. Community or group interest is another basic element in public opinion.

The desire for progress is an accepted hallmark of intelligence. Man will give his support to forward movements, to research programs and to political ventures with the feeling that in so doing he is supporting human betterment, even though a searching of his own soul may show he is supporting something which he hopes will eventually serve his own self-interests. Desire for progress, nevertheless, may be considered as another basic element of public opinion.

Any or all of the human emotions, beyond self-interest, may be basic elements of public opinion. Anger, fear, pity and other instincts

of emotion feed public opinion, and much of our most violent public opinion is formed on an emotional basis. Since emotions are quick to change, that public opinion which is based on emotional motivations is likely to be extremely volatile.

{ It is from such basic elements as self-interest, desire for progress and the emotions that public opinion is made, but there are many influences which bear upon the spread or suffocation of public opinion.

C. ' Freedom of discussion is as essential to the existence of free public opinion as air and light are to the growth of a plant. In the dictator countries there is no free public opinion because there is no free discussion. What is called public opinion is the parrot-like expression of doctrines forcibly laid down. With free speech and a free press in our democracy, we have a factor which is

bound to protect the existence of free public opinion in our own land, and we are finding that public opinion itself is forcing more and more liberal interpretations of the rights of a free press and free speech.

Opportunity for developing facts may well determine the breadth and depth of public opinion in its formation. There has been a great upswing in the search for facts in this country in the past generation. In the world of government and politics, we have long had investigating bodies, as well as governmental projects in research. Today, however, we find individuals and private bodies of citizens supporting fact-finding efforts in the fields of sociology, economics, politics, medicine and all those fields related to human well-being. In business, it is no longer enough to make and sell a product. The wise business man wants all of the facts behind

his product and uses those facts for the improvement of his product or service. It has been said we are a nation of fact hoarders. If so, therein may be found the reason ours is a nation where public opinion holds greater sway than anywhere else in the world.

Proximity is another factor which bears upon public opinion. The closer the public is to a problem, the stronger public opinion is with regard to that problem. Southern public opinion on the problems of crime in the great metropolises of the North is not too active. Nor is Northern public opinion on the race problem of the South kept at a fever heat. When our emotions are stirred, public opinion on distant European affairs can be whipped to a seeming frenzy, but it dies out quickly.

Sponsorship has much to do with public

opinion. "Who is behind it?" is a question most frequently asked. Without aggressive and well-known sponsorship, even a sound basis of public opinion has difficulty in growing into any effective size.

Frequency of statement is yet one more factor essential to the creation of public opinion. Facts gather strength as a rolling snowball gathers size. Statement and re-statement of a fact with frequency are essential to the life of public opinion on any idea.

Given these factors bearing on public opinion, we may consider some of the stimuli to public opinion.

XI

NATURAL STIMULI TO PUBLIC OPINION

By his very nature, man seeks the new and the novel. The invention of the automobile has stimulated public opinion with regard to highway development, just as the invention of the radio has stimulated change in public opinion with regard to music. With the creation of large numbers of unemployed, our public opinion toward relief measures and social security has been less and less apathetic. Social changes arouse new interests and stimulate new group judgments.

Simplicity is another stimulus to public opinion. A simple understandable idea is

much more likely to gain the weight of public opinion than one which is complex. This accounts for the use of slogans and symbols. The recent California monetary circulation project probably would have gained little headway if presented as such, but tagged "\$30.00 Every Thursday," it gained considerable favorable public opinion. Any idea which cannot be explained in terms understandable to the man in the street is likely to find its progress slow.

Dramatization is a powerful stimulus to public opinion. Labor has resorted to dramatization to a very considerable degree and, in fact, strikes are often dramatizations designed to stimulate public opinion. The 1938 election saw candidates resorting to musical performances to win attention, and a candidate who led a hillbilly band sang his way into the Governor's chair in a South-

ern state. The public likes a show. Given a dramatic performance, it is quickened in its acceptance or rejection of the idea behind that performance.

Universality, or the herd instinct, is a great stimulant to public opinion. Create the impression that everybody is doing it and your idea is bound to gain the momentum of public opinion.

Finally, the stimulus of reward is always present in the formulation of public opinion. It is doubtful if one man in ten understands the complex workings of our social security system, yet public opinion is behind that system, largely because it holds out the possibilities of a reward.

Reverse these stimuli and you have obstacles to the creation of public opinion; such as lack of proper advocacy which is one of the greatest obstacles to public opinion.

The American people are generous to a fault, and there is little doubt they had great sympathy for the suffering which the Chinese civilian population underwent during the Japanese invasion. Yet, the amount given by the American people for Chinese relief during the crisis was woefully small, probably because there was lack of adequate advocacy or sponsorship for the cause. Similarly, it is probable that agitation for old-age pensions which has gone on for the past generation might have come to fruition much sooner had the idea had strong advocacy.

Censorship and suppression are major obstacles to free public opinion. Without facts or with half truths there can be no true public opinion.

Evidence of this is, of course, seen in the dictator countries, and one of the best examples of it can be found in the last World

War when German public opinion forced an armistice when the facts of war losses and starvation prevailed over years of suppression and censorship. There is public censorship and suppression, and there is also the private suppression. Any business, industry, profession or cause which refuses to let the public have the facts, may look for an apathetic public opinion, if not an unfavorable one.

Beyond the complete suppression of facts, one obstacle to public opinion is an inadequacy of facts. No idea can hope to obtain the backing of public opinion on the basis of inadequate facts. The public mind is quick to question, and unless all of its questions are readily answered, it becomes suspicious.

Public opinion is an old force in life, but today we have greater appreciation of its power and the influences which bear upon it.

With knowledge of the factors which make public opinion, we are faced with the task of measuring existing public opinion.

Measurement of public opinion as it exists, and as it may exist, requires understanding. There must be understanding of past trends in public judgment—eras, fads and cycles. There must be understanding of the stability of group judgment, as well as of its instability.

With understanding arising out of experience, it is possible to estimate today's public opinion and forecast the probable trend of public opinion of tomorrow. In some few instances, this would seem to have been achieved by individuals having a natural and uncanny bent for judging public opinion. In most of these instances, however, inquiry would probably show that the predictions were based not merely on

“hunches,” but on long experience in judging trends in certain fields of public thinking.

There have been developed means of measuring public opinion, which when balanced against understanding give a fair picture of existing opinion.

Some of the current methods of measurement of public opinion are discussed hereafter.

XII

MEASURING PUBLIC OPINION

EVEN before the day of the Greek oracles, man sought means of forecast and prophecy. Black magic and the farmers' almanac, divining rods and horoscopes are all evidences of the constant search for tomorrow's truth.

Science has developed some fairly accurate means of forecast. The trend of the weather is now told with reasonable accuracy, and engineers have developed scientific means for indicating where it may be profitable to drill for oil.

Attempts to measure today's public opin-

ion, as an index of tomorrow's action, have been made in this country for many years. Within the past decade we have seen the measurement of public opinion approach a reasonably scientific basis—but such measurement is still used comparatively little. It has been estimated that only \$5,000,000 a year is spent by American business in investigating public opinion, as against \$300,000,000 for engineering research.

There are varying means of measuring public opinion of which none has reached the perfection of assured accuracy but several have demonstrated their efficiency—at least they show which way the wind of public opinion is blowing.

All of these methods rest on putting a question and tabulating the responses. All have certain similar basic factors which are worth considering here.

No measurement of public opinion can be held valid unless it is representative. It must be broad enough to give a cross-section of opinion in all groups in the area of the public being sought. It must be weighted for differing economic groups, social groups, political groups, sex and age groups, and geographic distribution.

The form of question proposed in a survey of public opinion is basic to the effectiveness of the study. The question must be so worded that it brings a free response, which is not guided or influenced by the form of the question.

The method of approach is also a basic factor. If the approach is by mail, the typographical appearance of the query may have an effect. One form of questionnaire may promote studied answers. Another may be so confusing as to induce a hurried and un-

thinking response. If the questions are put in personal interviews, the character of the interviewer is a factor of importance. An intelligent interviewer is more likely to prompt intelligent response than a careless tabulator of "yes" and "no" answers.

The standard for sampling is still another factor. In some studies, responses from 1,000 persons may be adequate, while in others, it may be desirable to seek many thousands of answers. There must be a fair basis for sampling if the result is to be of value.

Finally, the aims of the study are an important factor. If the aim be for commercial purposes, the character of the study may be quite different from one which seeks information on political aspects of public opinion.

Naturally, the accuracy of various means for measuring public opinion is not constant,

but we may well review some of the methods practiced.

The poll technique, based on the selection of a representative cross-section of samples for personal interview, is currently the most prevalent and has as its outstanding proponents Dr. George H. Gallup and his associate, Claude Robinson. Dr. Gallup, head of the American Institute of Public Opinion in Princeton, New Jersey, has observed that after 1,000 ballots have been distributed, more ballots change the trend by less than two per cent, thus providing the premise that a small sample, if truly representative, may at least indicate adequately the trend of public opinion. In 1935, when the Institute was first established, a combination of mailed ballots and personal interviews was used, but now polls are taken by a staff of more than 600 college-trained

Common interview

interviewers who make personal calls on a selected group of voters ranging in number from 3,000 to 50,000.

Each sample voter, before he is selected for polling is tested for (1) representation by states; (2) men and women; (3) urban-rural distribution; (4) age; (5) size of income; (6) political partisanship. Phraseology of questions is also tested, but Dr. Gallup believes that, unless the meaning is changed, different wording makes little difference in results. Dr. Gallup's polls normally take two weeks to complete but, in some cases, the job has been done within two days.

The "America Speaks" poll reported by Dr. Gallup in the columns of the New York *Herald-Tribune* during the fall of 1935 illustrates the early technique of a combination of mailed ballots and personal inter-


views. Dr. Gallup's more recent national polls have been conducted along pure sample interview lines.

Other important examples of the sample interview technique are the *Farm Journal* poll, the poll on national issues conducted by Dr. Daniel Starch in the fall of 1935 and reported in the Boston *Herald*, the *Fortune Magazine* quarterly polls of public opinion, and the "National Barometer" poll conducted by Archibald M. Crossley, president of Crossley, Incorporated, during the 1936 presidential campaign under the auspices of the New York *American*. The *Farm Journal*, published in Philadelphia, has polled farmers throughout the country in every campaign since 1912, using mailed ballots until the 1936 campaign when personal interviews were used exclusively to obtain a

cross-section of farm opinion from some 50,000 farmers in 32 states.

The Boston *Herald* poll used a combination of mailed ballots and personal interviews, whereas the *Fortune Magazine* polls follow the more recent Gallup technique. The Crossley poll in 1936 took samples of opinion each week to test the trend as the presidential campaign progressed.

The mailed ballot technique of polling public opinion has been virtually discarded as unscientific, unrepresentative and overcostly. The outstanding example of this technique was the widely publicized *Literary Digest* polls conducted in the presidential campaign years. In 1936, the *Literary Digest* mailed ballots to some 19,000,000 persons throughout the country whose names were drawn from telephone directories, automobile license lists and business



firm lists. No scientific attempt was made to obtain a true cross-section and the total cost of conducting the poll, in which 5,000 persons were employed, was almost \$600,000, with \$390,000 being expended for postage alone.

Another example of the mailed ballot was in the case of the poll of 755,000 Maryland voters conducted by the Baltimore *Sun* in 1936. Official election registration lists were used. Also in 1936 the National Bureau of Research and Referendum mailed ballots to 75,000 names distributed throughout the 48 states in proportion to the number of voters in each state in 1932.

Newspapers have made frequent polls of public opinion, either mailing ballots to readers or querying editors to determine their estimates as to how the public is thinking. Three thousand country newspapers in

cooperation with the Publishers Autocaster Service and the American Press conducted the so-called "Grass Roots" poll in 1936, in which some 900,000 votes were received from rural homes. The paper *Newsdom* questioned the editors and publishers of 228 newspapers in 30 states. This poll was concentrated on the small rural papers in the belief that editors of these papers were in closer touch with the sentiments of their readers and that the sentiments of the larger city papers were more generally known. Also during the last presidential campaign, the *Daily Princetonian* invited college newspapers throughout the country to conduct campus polls for preference of leading candidates.

A ramification of the typical newspaper poll is that conducted by Rogers C. Dunn in 1936. He based his predictions on the as-

sumptions that the number of voters in a congressional district is approximately the same as the number of daily newspaper readers in the district, and that newspapers accurately reflect the political opinions of their readers. By studying the context of newspapers, their editorial and reader comments, and the amount of space given to varying political reports, he endeavored to predict the outcome of the election.

Under the direction of Henry C. Link, the Psychological Corporation has recently been conducting polls known as "psychological barometers." The sample interview technique of the Gallup polls is used with emphasis centering on the wording of the questions, it being the belief of the directors of this poll that the change of but two words may cause a 10 to 20 per cent difference in the results. These polls, taken by 55 psy-

chologists who send out from 300 to 500 trained interviewers in 48 cities and towns, have been used mainly to find out the buying habits of consumers, but have also been used privately on political questions.

The "panel" technique, using also the sample interview methods, represents another recent scientific development in measuring public opinion. Dr. Paul Lazarsfeld, Research Associate in the School of Public Affairs at Princeton, has developed this technique based on the selection of a permanent representative panel to which successive questions are applied. In this way, shifts in opinion from one period or event to another are recorded. The "panel" technique has been used by the *Woman's Home Companion* magazine, where a panel of 1,500 Reader-Editors has been established as a

permanent jury on policies and magazine content.

Efficacy of polls may be questioned from time to time, but they demonstrate increasing accuracy. In the last New York State election, the Gallup poll showed less than half of one per cent of error in the gubernatorial election results.

Henry Grady Weaver, who plumbs public desires and opinion, for the General Motors Corporation, sums up his faith in such measurement in the statement that "two million opinions make a fact." Trends of opinion toward fact are indicated in far less than two million opinions.

Naturally the polls which have been described here do not fit the needs of every individual or every business institution. The underlying methods, however, may be adapted to individual needs and in an Ap-

pendix we outline a plan for the measurement of public opinion for a business.

When public opinion has been measured, the public relations program can be laid down to fix policies which will meet existing public opinion and inform the public with regard to those policies.

XIII

METHODS IN MEETING PUBLIC OPINION

MEASUREMENT of public opinion seeks to utilize methods as scientific as those of the engineer who estimates the wear and tear of friction on a machine.

Meeting public opinion is a task which demands equal effort to approach scientific standards, and the full utilization of recorded experience.

When the state of public opinion has been determined as accurately as possible, the problem then is what to do about it.

If there is a preponderance of favorable

opinion, then the best course may be dead ahead, but with frequent soundings.

It is when the preponderance of opinion is unfavorable that a planned course of action is most necessary. There must be an adjustment of conduct to meet the generally accepted ethical standards of the public. Where there is a misconception with regard to existing conduct the public should be informed. This is a task for public relations counsel, and calls for an orderly procedure of action.

A sound public relations program, like a silver coin, has two sides, each clear-cut and distinctive. When the state of public opinion toward an idea, an institution or a corporation, has been ascertained within reasonable limits, it is then essential to establish a thorough knowledge of the idea, the corporation

or institution itself, by means of a carefully planned survey and study.

What basic idea, for example, activates the individual or underlies the institution? If it is a corporation, what are its fundamental purposes and services? Its policies? Its special problems? What are the essential facts of its operation, of processes and production in the light of their social and economic significance? What are its aims, ideals and plans?

A thorough study of these factors then turns its attention to those other phases of corporate life that may have an important bearing upon public opinion—the many and varied relationships of management, internal and public.

It examines the relationships with stockholders, and with employees, including

labor, clerical staffs, executive employees and sales and distributing groups.

It examines the relationships with customers, with industry, with the press and with the general public and the state.

It makes a searching inquiry of the relationships of personnel to consumer and to community groups, seeking for the facts both within the institution and without, in all significant areas which the day-by-day activities of the institution and its representatives touch.

The study should also develop the financial background of the idea or institution; plans for future development; conditions and needs arising out of unfavorable public opinion.

The development of these facts requires a searching for facts both within the institu-

tion and without, in all of those areas which it touches.

Having measured public opinion and determined the essential facts regarding the idea or institution, the material gathered should be analyzed in the light of known principles of favorable public relations. Experience has shown that certain elements are essential to sound public relations, and on the part of the idea or the institution these may include:

STRONG CASE. Is there, within the idea of the institution, the basis for a major appeal to public opinion? Can it be built around a basic and unifying theme of social and economic service? Is corporate policy built upon the idea of service and responsibility and has it been so interpreted to the public? Are corporate plans in line with sound pub-

lic needs, wants and desires, latent or expressed?

The analysis of the case should indicate any weaknesses it may have and obstacles which must be overcome before there can be successful advocacy.

LEADERSHIP. The case for the idea or institution must have behind it leadership, and the analysis should indicate its effectiveness and suggest where its efforts may be concentrated or where it may be strengthened or augmented.

ORGANIZATION. The analysis should point out the most effective type of organization to be set up both within and without the institution, for the execution of the public relations program. It should indicate the union of the forces of management and align ex-

ecutives, employees, stockholders and others in a joint and effective advocacy of the cause.

THE FIELD OF RESPONSE. Those who are expected to respond to the advocacy should be subjected to analytical study. The areas in which advocacy should be exerted should be defined, and an estimate made of the probable extent of response.

FAVORABLE AND UNFAVORABLE FACTORS. The favorable and unfavorable factors should be listed and weighed.

CONCLUSIONS. The conclusions, based on the analysis, should provide a summary of the analytical findings and a candid view of the existing condition—with recommendations for policy—which will meet with

public opinion, or means for correcting public opinion with regard to misunderstood policy. Such recommendations must be drawn in the light of what the public *is thinking*, and not of what the public *ought to be thinking*. Finally, the analysis should estimate the possibilities of success and show in what methods success will lie.

The methods set down in orderly and logical fashion will provide a plan which is a blueprint, a timetable, a table of material and specifications, and a personnel requisition. The plan lays down a course of action to be followed, sets forth the goal to be achieved, and, on the basis of experience and study, estimates the probable limits of the effort and its cost.

The plan sets forth the thesis of the case to be presented and the material and media suggested for advocacy.

Most important to the plan is the definition of the organization required. No advocacy can be expected to become successful without an organization behind it. This organization may be a trade association; it may be a group within an institution; a group of friendly leaders in the field; or it may be a small professional staff working with full authority and cooperation of management and stockholders. The organization framework should be charted showing the machine which will yield the results, those who are actively engaged in the effort and their responsibilities.

There should also be an operating schedule showing the progress to be aimed at in given periods, so that the entire effort may move forward at the required speed.

Finally, the plan should include a detailed statement of costs, estimated on the

basis of averages of similar costs in past efforts of a kindred nature.

Out of this survey, analysis and plan, there will come at least six immediate results:

1. CRYSTALLIZATION OF AIMS. It will determine candidly the aims which can be logically and reasonably sought.

2. DEFINITION OF BOUNDARIES. It will indicate whether the idea or institution is working within too close boundaries or whether it is outside its legitimate sphere.

3. PREPARATION. It will indicate whether the idea or institution is ready for advocacy, or whether it requires further strengthening within itself.

4. **TIME.** The time element provided by the plan assures continued activity, with definite time goals.

5. **WORKING SCHEME.** The plan will show what factors are available to work with and what measures are practical.

6. **ESTIMATE OF COSTS.** The plan will lay down an estimate of costs and prevent over-expenditure, or an attempt to achieve an end without the necessary financial appropriation.

There has been described a basic method of establishing the program of public relations. To have force, this program must be directed at known areas where public opinion may form. It is advisable to review some of these areas which are sources of public opinion.



THE PRIMARY POINTS OF APPROACH IN DEVELOPING A PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

THE BACKGROUND

It is necessary to establish the prevailing business and ethical standards of an industry as a whole, and the standards demanded by public opinion of that industry, in order that recommendations may be made as to principles of conduct which should guide public relations of a single corporation in that industry. Therefore, the primary investigation of facts should be made on the following lines:

1. Purpose of the industry.
2. Basic idea of service.
3. What need does it supply?
 - Necessity
 - Luxury
 - Social
 - Fad
4. Economic, social or ephemeral quality of service.
5. General public opinion of the service.
6. General customer opinion of the service.
7. History of development of the industry:
 - Scope
 - Production
 - Quality
 - Sales—Dollars and Units
 - Finances

- Number of Employees
- Public Opinion
 - Points of Satisfaction
 - Points of Dissatisfaction
- 8. General attitude of industry toward customers.
- 9. General attitude of industry toward public.
- 10. Business standards which govern the industry:
 - A. Past*
 - Employees
 - Customers
 - Officers
 - Stockholders
 - Public
 - Government
 - B. Present*
 - (Covering scope as in 10-A)
- 11. Ethical standards of the operation of the business (covering scope as in 10-A).
- 12. Standards set by public opinion (covering scope as in 10-A).

CONCLUSIONS

Having established the fundamental standards of the industry with regard to business ethics and opinion, it is then necessary to proceed to a similar detailed investigation of the corporation under consideration, its organization, its product, or service, its policy and its relationships.

XIV

AREAS WHERE PUBLIC OPINION MAY FORM

THE rifle marksman aims at one target. The skeet marksman aims at a succession of targets.

Successful effort in informing the public requires ability to aim at a single target, or at a variety of targets simultaneously, with equal accuracy.

The targets of a public relations program are the points of contact or the areas where public opinion may form. Each and every one must be "sighted" before the shooting begins.

The obvious target is found close to home,

beginning with the internal group, which includes the members of management as well as the body of employees. It is just as important that the top executives follow the policy of conduct desired by the public as the lowest paid employee. The second point of contact probably will be found among the customers and vendors. Then come the stockholders, competitors or the trade, and, finally, the general public. In the last category the points of contact are almost innumerable, and may range from the telephone girl who answers a call and the truck driver who fails to observe the courtesies of the road, to the pedestrian who finds himself in a traffic jam caused by poor parking regulations in front of a place of business.

The points of contact are potentially as numerous as the population count.

Although public opinion is formed by

cumulative individual opinion any plan to meet it should give full consideration to the force of groups which influence the course of public opinion.

Any organized group, whether formed for the purpose of creating public opinion or not, is a potential source of public opinion. It has become a habit of conversation to refer to sewing circles as sources of gossip. This may be unjust, but it is certain that any time more than two persons gather together for any purpose, there is a potential force in public opinion forming.

Political, trade and professional groups are obviously sources of public opinion. Just as potential, however, may be groups formed for purely social reasons. Random thoughts expressed over the coffee at a luncheon club are likely to be repeated as mature opinion at a mid-afternoon business conference. Any

program for informing the public should, therefore, make every effort practicable to reach all possible groups, directing the effort through the channels of their normal major interests.

Every group and every individual has normal major interests. In some instance, it may be law; in others, finance; and in some, sport. The approach in such cases should be tuned to those interests, and the story told from the aspect of its legal, financial, sporting or other phases.

While major normal interests vary, there are standard thought patterns which afford a normal approach to interest.

TEN TYPICAL AREAS WHERE
UNFAVORABLE PUBLIC
OPINION MAY
BREED

1. A brusque phone operator.
2. A truck driver who "hogs" the road.
3. An executive who is unpopular in his social life.
4. A curt form letter.
5. Lack of personal neatness in the staff.
6. Gloomy or bizarre physical surroundings in a business office.
7. Referring customers from one department to another.
8. Inaccessible officers.
9. Disinterest in community enterprises.
10. Failure to reply to complaint.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AT ITS SOURCE

What Do *These* People Think

Stockholders	Politicians	Club Officials
Customers	Salesmen	Teachers
Employees	Taxi Drivers	Job Hunters
Newspapermen	Retailers	Family Doctors
Clergymen	Waiters	Former Employees

About *These* People

Directors	Buyers	Secretaries
Executives	Credit Men	Dealers
Salesmen	Repair Men	Radio Announcers
Branch Managers	Receptionists	Demonstrators
Employment	Telephone	Truck Drivers
Officers	Operators	

XV

APPROACHES TO PUBLIC OPINION

COLUMBUS was a brave man and a very fortunate navigator.

The aids which Columbus had when he sailed the Atlantic were nothing as compared to the information which a modern navigator has at his disposal.

The modern navigator not only has charts of prevailing winds, tides, currents and depths, but he has radio direction finders and information about the surface of the ocean floor which he can use for navigation purposes.

The astral guides, the sun and the stars,

which were available to Columbus are still available to navigators, but they no longer have to be depended upon entirely.

As yet, the charts of shifting, flowing currents of public opinion are far from complete.

Experience has indicated some channels to public opinion. It is possible for the trained public relations counsel to set a fair course, because there are certain standard patterns which indicate means of approach to public opinion. Some of these aids to the public relations counsel in approaching public opinion are given here.

FAMILIARITY governs thought to a considerable degree. The lawyer understands and is interested more easily in those things which concern the law.

AFFIRMATION is an element in the normal thought practice. The average person accepts more readily an affirmative statement than a denial.

ASSOCIATION directs thought. Explanation of an unknown fact in terms of a known fact gains acceptance. The Londoner, for instance, accepts the height of the Empire State Building more readily when told it is so many times as tall as the Nelson Monument in Trafalgar Square.

AUTHORITY prompts favorable thought. An idea expressed by a well-known authority on any subject attains much more support than the same idea expressed by an unknown, irrespective of the truth involved.

CONFORMITY finds its place in the usual

processes of thought. The average individual likes to feel he is thinking in conformity with what other people are thinking. Of course, allowance must be made for the congenital objector, who always wants to be on the side of the minority.

AGREEABLENESS is also in the standard pattern of thought. Most people readily accept the agreeable while they may dodge the disagreeable as far as possible.

ALTRUISM readily finds a niche in standard thinking too. People like to accept that which they believe marks them as generous in spirit and thought.

PRACTICALITY is found in the pattern as well. An idea has to sound practical and may be quickly rejected if it does not.

Knowing what part of the public to inform, and some of the methods to be considered in reaching their thoughts, one naturally asks what media for communication of ideas are employed in placing a thought before the public.

Ideally, a program for improved public relations which aims to inform the public should take advantage of every known channel for reaching man's mind.

Once that was comparatively simple. To-day it is not.

The newspaper is often considered the major means of reaching public opinion. Many successful efforts in public relations are carried on which never make their mark on the roaring presses of the newspapers. The newspaper remains a powerful and effective means of reaching public opinion, but it cannot be relied upon as the only

medium, and often it can be dropped from the program when special small groups are to be reached.

The printed word, whether it be news in the newspaper, display advertising, pamphlet, book, poster, letter or leaflet, is a major medium.

The spoken word is another. This may come in a public utterance at a meeting, in a radio address, by phonographic record, or in private conversation.

The visual act is yet another. Demonstration of a policy conveys an idea and affects opinion. This may be some courtesy in business procedure, it may be an exhibit, a window display or it may be some staged demonstration. Television may also soon become practical for this purpose.

A carefully prepared program of public relations will evaluate every approach to the

mind, will choose those which are practical for the purpose desired and will plan for their use. Often a public relations program may utilize as many as 25 or 30 different media, employing all of them concurrently in accordance with an interrelated plan.

Having reviewed the methods used in establishing a public relations program, some of the sources of public opinion and approaches to that opinion, we may now consider some of the principles which are factors in public relations programs.

MEDIA USED FOR THE PRESENTATION OF AN IDEA

Action. This may constitute a simple act which indicates a policy—such as a meeting between an employer and the representative of organized labor. It may constitute a dramatization such as the celebration of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad's hundredth anniversary. It may be a seemingly outward courtesy, such as the provision of a parking lot for employees.

The Spoken Word. This medium covers a wide field. It may include the use of radio speeches, informal conversations, or the coupling of words with a motion picture.

The Printed Word. This medium also has wide usage. It may be a Christmas greeting on a billboard, a story or advertisement in the newspaper, a pamphlet, a message printed on a pay envelope, or a letter to a customer.

The Visual. This medium appeals to the mind through the eye. It covers fields as widely varying as the motion picture, the window display, the exhibit, or even the modernization of a factory front.



PUBLIC RELATIONS COUNSEL AT WORK

*"Public relations . . . is
not something written to
be read, but something
done and built into the
fabric of social life."*

W. J. CAMERON



XVI

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

OIL is not man-made. It exists. Man refines oil and creates power that drives millions of wheels.

Public relations exists, but it may be improved or damaged as it accords with certain recognized fundamental principles. Experience and study have demonstrated that among the more important of these principles, in the area of corporate and institutional relations, are the following:

One common basis underlies all sound public relations. It must adhere, in fundamental policies, to the commonly recog-

nized standards of personal ethics and the highest concept of the public welfare.

The field of sound public relations comprises every phase of corporate or institutional activity which touches in any way the public interest. No area can be reserved or tabooed.

A sound public relations program has but one purpose: the promotion of favorable public understanding concerning corporate or institutional services, products, relationships, and policies. It is on the basis of such understanding that public good will, appreciation, approval and favorable action flow.

The promotion of policies of public service and their understanding should be openly undertaken; responsibility accepted. Sponsorship should not be concealed and objectives should be stated.

A basic and demonstrable purpose of im-

mediate usefulness or ultimate service to mankind of corporate and institutional activity is requisite to public understanding.

It is a corporate and institutional obligation to test and ascertain the public's understanding and appreciation of its products, services, policies and relationships.

Conduct should be shaped to the demands of the public and its constituent groups, their needs and desires whether latent and obscure or keenly alive. This includes the obligation of research.

Policies when presented to the public should reveal the fundamental principles of good upon which they are based.

Acts and policies should be based upon a recognition of the existence of a community of rights and interests, represented by owners, management, employees, customers, the public and the state.

Acts and policies should be based upon the recognition of the existence of mutual obligations and responsibilities among all groups included in the community of interest.

It is a corporate and institutional obligation to further the principle of free enterprise and competition by offering services and products at fair and reasonable prices.

It is a right of corporations and institutions to possess equality with other groups in the public presentation of their case, which includes the use of methods of attack as well as of defense.

It is a corporate and institutional obligation to see that products and services are constantly being improved and that the advantages of technological advances are passed on, with due regard to the factors of stable employment.

The ultimate arbiter of corporate and institutional acts, policies, services, relationships and products is public opinion.

Sound policies, services and relationships cannot be wholly exposed to the judgment of public opinion without overt manifestation of corporate good will and public interest.

These principles are necessary to the very creation of a public relations program. There are likewise principles basic to the effective operation of such a program.

XVII

PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE OPERATION IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

It isn't always the best horse that wins. A great deal depends on how the horse is ridden.

Public relations counsel maintains a professional plane when it adheres to a set of formulated principles of sound and permanent public relations. It is effective when it observes principles of operation which have demonstrated their value. Some of these principles of operation follow:

Sound public relations provides for the

entry of counsel at the point of policy origination and not after policy formulation.

Counsel is qualified in the measure in which it is based upon a knowledge of sociological forces and as it represents the composite skills of the logician, the journalist, and psychologist, the economist and the executive.

Public relations counsel is effective in proportion to its foundation upon (1) the facts; (2) the regulations of government; and (3) the known opinion of customers, employees, owners, management, and the public.

Complete public understanding of policies, products, services and relations is attained only when the basic ideas underlying them are translated, visualized or presented in easily understandable terms to all intel-

lectual levels and capacities of understanding.

Thorough promotion of understanding of policies, products, services and relationships is attained only when the constituent groups—ownership, management and employees—participate in such promotion.

Public relations counsel must be thoroughly informed on the case of the opposition.

Sound public relations counsel is predicated upon a program designed to meet average individual or personal ethics or morals.

Public relations counsel is valid only when based upon a knowledge of the fundamentals of human conduct, thought and emotions.

Public relations counsel is effective when it functions with a sense of responsibility to both client and public.

Sound public relations counsel maintains an open and constant evaluation of its work.

These are some of the principles on which a public relations program is based and operated.

We now may well examine some practical examples of various phases of public relations programs.

XVIII

PUBLIC RELATIONS
PROGRAMS IN ACTION

“IF you want to know who’s boss around here, start something!” A generation ago that sign hung in many an office and factory. True, it was regarded in part as a form of humor, but it represented to a degree an attitude. Since then, there has been a change in our philosophies of life and business.

Today enlightened leadership does not resist, it seeks to adjust. Adjustment of conduct in human relationships is public relations work. Some practical examples of interesting activities in public relations are set forth here. These examples are but integral

parts of a program, but they give an indication of the directions in which a public relations program may work.

The old-time business man went on the theory that if he gave the consumer fair value for his money, his part of the relationship had been fulfilled.

Today business realizes that "how" it does business is as important as its product.

CUSTOMERS. Good will of the consumer is as essential as a sound product at a fair price.

The gas station manager probably exemplifies this idea of service, plus a product, as well as any one. The large oil concerns of this country spend millions each year in seeking the good will of their customers, and in creating an atmosphere about their business that will engender good human relationships.

Some recent endeavors which were part of programs to create good relationships are found in the following instances:

Fifth Avenue Coach Company—this company distributed its annual report to passengers, to give an impression of the company's business position and the reason it charges a ten cent fare.

General Motors—each year General Motors sends a questionnaire to motor car owners asking their suggestions for changes in new models, making the consumer feel that his wants are being watched.

Shredded Wheat Company—this company arranges plant visits for consumers to show them how the product is manufactured.

Owens-Illinois Glass Company—this concern has produced a pamphlet—"The

Man Behind the Product"—which aims to show the customer the care and skill that goes into its product.

United States Steel Corporation—this great corporation has had produced a motion picture in technicolor, which tells the consumer and the public how U.S. Steel is made and demonstrates the corporation's methods in efficiently and economically producing steel to meet man's needs.

Los Angeles Bank—a bank in Los Angeles has established a "drive-in" teller's window where the customer may make deposits without leaving his car.

B. Altman & Company—this company went to added expense to wall in sections of its store where new escalators were being installed so that the customer would not be annoyed by noise.

Bonwit-Teller—this fashionable store

sends personal letters to new customers, signed by the President, thanking them for their patronage.

Further examples of similar efforts in creating improved relationships might be given, but sufficient have been cited to indicate that modern business today not only says the customer is always right, but wants him to be friendly and happy.

EMPLOYEES. An effective and essential method of promoting sound human conduct is found in a planned program of internal relations—a fixed policy of maintaining an attitude among employees which will reflect favorably in the outside world.

There are innumerable methods for carrying on such a program with employees, all based on sound recognition of responsi-

bility toward employees, without paternalism.

Many business organizations today issue manuals of instructions to new employees which, in content and format, indicate the corporation's attitude toward its employees. These manuals enable the employee to gain quickly a knowledge of his job and his employer and start him off with a favorable attitude toward his job. They offer frank and helpful information, avoiding "do's" and "don't's" and, while friendly, maintain a dignity of relationship.

General Motors Corporation has recently announced a policy of protecting the security of employees by a plan which will make wages available during seasonal layoffs.

The Johns-Manville Corporation publishes an annual report for employees which

not only gives the employee an indication of the trend of business, but shows him what he contributes to profits and what portion of income he receives.

The wise employer is concerned with his employees both in and out of the factory.

Any board of trade official will tell you that in promoting factory sites, the first questions asked by wise industrialists concern matters of suitable living conditions for employees. How many schools are there? Are there hospital facilities? Is there adequate entertainment opportunity? What transportation facilities are there? Is housing available at fair rentals?

One large corporation recently brought about great improvement in its employee relations by purchasing property and establishing a parking lot for employees.

Representation of employee groups be-

fore management is now commonly accepted, whether employees are organized or unorganized.

Employers endeavor to go well beyond the law in providing healthy conditions of work and opportunities within the plant for making it possible for the workers to go out at night decently presentable.

Many employers have done away with private elevators and other prerogatives for executives, thus avoiding class distinctions within their plants.

The whole tendency is toward sensible and non-paternalistic endeavor for sound relations with employees, without which there can be little hope for sound external relations—and when it comes to interpreting company policy, employees can be a most effective source of favorable public opinion.

STOCKHOLDERS. Twenty-five years ago the average corporation official regarded his stockholders, except those holding large blocks of stock, as indefinite persons to be paid dividends when possible.

Today, as the ownership of American business has become more widely dispersed and the dependence of successful operation upon public good will more widely realized, the stockholder has become the object of intensive cultivation not only because he represents a segment of public opinion, but because he can be an effective agent of good will for the company.

The fact that nearly 650,000 common stockholders today are listed by one large American corporation is indicative of the magnitude and importance of the problem of stockholder relations.

A survey of the field shows that the com-

monly accepted methods of stockholder cultivation today include:

ANNUAL REPORTS. A study of sample reports issued by American business organizations shows that over 50 per cent contain something more than the bare financial statements introduced by a perfunctory note of transmittal. There appear to be four major types of reports published today:

1. Reports, such as those issued by the Caterpillar Tractor Company and by the General Foods Corporation which aim at simplifying the facts of company operation and finance by means of charts and pictorial statistics in the briefest and most understandable manner.

2. Reports such as those issued by the American Telephone and Telegraph Com-

pany, General Motors Corporation, United States Steel Corporation, General Electric Company and others which seek to give a comprehensive picture of corporate operation, policy and finance at considerable length.

3. Reports such as those issued by a large majority of corporations which contain a brief and fairly technical explanation of the financial management and the regularly audited financial statement.

4. Reports, notably those issued by railroads, which contain voluminous tables of financial facts and statistics of operation with little or no explanation and which are understandable only by experts.

About 10 per cent of the annual reports studied carried some sort of product promo-

tion—the General Foods Corporation using a full color page of its packaged products.

In recent years, larger corporations have included in their reports comments on general economic conditions, governmental action and the social responsibility of business organizations. There appears to be a tendency in the more effective reports to discuss the theory and practice of general business organization in the United States.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING AND PROXY. According to one large trust company, about 50 per cent of such formal notices of meetings and requests for proxies are accompanied by a covering letter from the president of the company.

INTERIM REPORTS. A large majority of corporations issue interim reports, quar-

terly, semi-annually or irregularly, but only a small percentage of companies send such reports to stockholders. These interim reports usually are confined to earnings for the period in comparison with earnings for a similar period in the previous year. A few concerns send out quarterly reports in the form of news bulletins with the financial statement as one item. Others include some form of institutional or product promotion.

DIVIDEND DISTRIBUTION. Of 75 corporations paying dividends through one large trust company in New York, from 25 to 30 per cent enclose stuffers of some sort. About half the enclosures consist merely of printed slips, describing the dividend, or printed address forms. Other enclosures range from blotters to four-color advertising leaflets.

LETTERS TO NEW STOCKHOLDERS. Some corporations as, for example, General Motors, the American Tobacco Company and General Foods make it a custom to send welcoming letters to new stockholders. Such letters include suggestions that the stockholder can increase his profits by helping to increase the company's sales and indicate that the management welcomes suggestions and criticisms from stockholders.

LETTERS TO PERSONS WHO HAVE SOLD STOCK. A small number of corporations, notably General Motors, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, General Foods and the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, send letters to persons who have sold their stock, expressing regret, offering to continue to send reports and other material and asking if the sale resulted from

displeasure with corporation policy or action.

HOUSE ORGANS. The most notable example of a corporation sending a house organ to stockholders is the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, which mails the "Lamp" to all but those holding a very limited amount of stock.

SAMPLES. Consumer product companies sometimes send samples of goods to stockholders. As a dividend feature, the National Distillers Company offered stockholders cases of whiskey or other liquors provided they paid the taxes and transportation.

MISCELLANEOUS. Letters, folders, announcements of new products, reprints of articles or speeches by corporation officers and questionnaires are used by various cor-

porations as a means of cultivating their stockholders.

In conclusion, a survey of the field of stockholder relations indicates a growing realization of the value of a planned program of stockholder cultivation, a definite tendency to simplify explanations of corporate management and an increasing desire to justify the philosophy of the American system of business organization.

There is still much to be done in furthering favorable relations with stockholders. For instance, few corporations have yet indicated an awareness of the fact that approximately 45 per cent of the stocks held in this country are owned by women.

WITH THE GENERAL PUBLIC. The efforts at establishing good relationships with consumer, employee and stockholder are ex-

pected to carry beyond those immediate groups and have an equally salutary effect on relationships with the general public.

Most institutions use a reverse method, and address a part of their program to the general public, assuming that thus they will also have an effect on the groups with which they are more closely concerned.

Hardly a day goes by but that there are outstanding examples of the widespread endeavor to create good relationships between institutions and the general public.

JOHNS-MANVILLE. When this company appointed a representative of the public to its board of directors, it was an effort to create a sounder human relationship.

FORD MOTOR COMPANY. The Sunday evening symphonies provided by this company

are aimed to establish good will with the public and create an impression of quality in connection with the name of Ford.

AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY. Consistently generous contributions by this company to community social welfare and health projects indicate the company policy of responsibility for community well-being.

THE RUBEROID COMPANY. This company prepared a brief and interesting history of shelter, which was given wide distribution. Its object was to create a favorable public opinion toward advances made in housing man.

DISTILLERS CORPORATION—SEAGRAMS, LTD. This liquor concern, through a cam-

paign for temperance in drinking, is seeking good human relationships with the general public.

These are but a few of the activities in public relationships.

They are indicative that business understands the policy of "the public be damned," like the dinosaur, belongs to the Mesozoic era.

Some of the activities cited may seem so simple as to lead to the belief that public relations activities can be seized upon in emergencies as one reaches for a fire extinguisher. Experience has shown this to be untrue. Not only must there be a well conceived plan, but there must also be understanding of what that plan can and cannot do. There are pre-requisites to every public relations program.

XIX

PRE-REQUISITES TO SPONSORSHIP OF A PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

THE parable of the house built on the sands may be applied to public relations.

No public relations program can withstand the waves of public opinion, unless it is built on a firm foundation of understanding by those sponsoring the program.

We have already outlined some of the principles upon which public relations programs must rest. We have set forth some of the standards required of those who plan and operate these programs, and examples of methods employed.

There is another important pre-requisite to successful public relations. Those seeking public relations counsel must understand what they can expect in results. They must realize that the work begins within the institution and guided action by the institution itself is the raw material from which improved relations will be built.

The institution which decides to have a professional job in public relations simply because its competitors are following this course, or because it believes it is in accord with the trend of the times, is simply wasting time, money and effort.

There must be, on the part of the sponsoring group, a sound sincerity of purpose. There must be a striving to reach by direct route the standards of ethics which the public demands. There must be no underlying hope that through a public relations pro-

gram evils will be covered up or apologized for.

The sponsoring group must also have a complete understanding of what public relations programs will do. It cannot expect public relations effort immediately to become a cure-all for its business troubles of all sorts. It must not expect to be able to tally up the increases of profit due directly to public relations work.

The sponsoring group must have faith in the public relations program. It cannot expect it to be effective if it is considered as a half-hearted experiment. Without the backing of faith, public relations work can quickly decline into ineffectual dawdling.

Executive consideration and attention is a pre-requisite to a public relations program. It must have the top executive authority

back of it, and those operating the program must have ready access to the top executive.

There must be a willingness to submit to truth, frankness and absolute candor before any public relations program is undertaken. Unless these essentials are accepted as fundamentals, then the effort will be only an attempt to fool public opinion, and the people do NOT like to be fooled.

There can be no super-sensitiveness when a public relations program is undertaken. The sponsoring group must be ready to listen to criticisms and to accept existing public judgments as realities, even though those judgments are based on misinformation.

The sponsoring group must also be aware of all of its responsibilities to all sections of the public. There is no hope for a public relations program which is designed to attract

certain portions of the public and ignore others. There is no sense in seeking to win the favorable attitude of stockholders, at the same time turning the back upon an unfavorable attitude existing among employees.

Finally, the sponsoring group must be willing to appropriate the money necessary to carry out the program completely. Public relations programs can be economical, but a program cannot be carried out in a niggardly fashion. And this does not imply lavish entertainment and expense charges, for public opinion is not bought in these days.

Public relations effort performs no miracles. It merely brings about logical results from logical action.

The logical action must be agreed upon before the results can be expected.

We have discussed principles and meth-

ods in public relations. What of men? What qualities are required of public relations counsel?

XX

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND MEN IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

IT is not so long since dentistry was a sideline for the village druggist, and before that the barber practiced blood-letting. Most professions have passed through the stage when they were measured by entirely inadequate standards of requirement.

Public relations counsel as a profession is so new that even today it frequently is assigned as a task to those who have few of the requirements for it.

The requirements of the profession in

terms of general aptitude, background and professional skills are many, and rapidly men equipped with essentials are reaching the top level. Those without adequate training and knowledge are passing into the background.

Aside from the cardinal qualities essential to all professions, such as honesty, reliability, and a due regard for ethical concepts, this profession requires a number of basic characteristics which are directly involved both in the type of work done, and in the relationships essential to effective operation.

Counsel very properly may represent only one side in a controversy; yet effectiveness will be lost if counsel fails to bear in mind the case of the opposition, and the interests of the public.

For that reason, those engaged in this pro-

fession should possess to an unusual degree the qualities of tolerance, poise, candor, tact, and social or personal acceptance by all types of people.

And because the profession is one of personal service, on the professional plane, counsel should also possess the qualities of discretion, adaptability, and responsiveness to the ideas of others.

Preferably, counsel's experience should have been such as to have given him an understanding of the point of view of those who work with their hands, of those who live in small towns, of the average citizen comprising the composite American.

His education should have been based broadly on the liberal arts, but should have included a sound foundation in psychology, history, sociology and economics.

And his training prior to engaging in this

profession should have included some practicing journalism, an understanding of the principles of business, some knowledge of office and factory organization, familiarity with basic engineering procedures and no little experience in the gathering and analysis of both fact and opinion.

Finally, it may be assumed that by natural inclination and deliberate practice he who would follow this profession should read widely, travel far, and meet easily people of all classes in fruitful discussions of the hundred and one topics of current interest to the average man and woman.

The professional skills essential to public relations work embrace a number of fields.

As one familiar with economics and sociology, counsel should first of all be generally familiar with the broad historical trends involved, and intimately familiar with cur-

rent cycles of popular opinion, business and politics.

As a reporter, he must collect facts and gather opinion.

As a logician, he must analyze his findings and weigh them in the light of previously determined standards and experience.

As an engineer, he must chart a plan of action based on the analysis; seeing to it that all the various programs involved are synchronized in point of time, and are budgeted in point of cost.

More than a theorist, he must be able to see that the plan is carried out; arranging for the necessary personnel, equipment and other facilities, and maintaining, for effective operation, an adequate degree of supervision.

As a statistician, he must lay out and maintain the proper type of statistical con-

trols essential to a running evaluation of the work and to the right kind of records for future reference.

Throughout these processes, of course, he must exercise those functions of the public relations counsel which embrace the origination of ideas, the framing of the case, the planning and production of material advancing the case, and constant liaison with all persons involved.

By virtue of these essential functions, it is thus not too much to say that this form of public relations calls for a composite of the logician, the journalist, the psychologist, the economist, and the executive.

Granting the validity of these requirements, it follows that it is difficult to find any *one* individual who can qualify; as it is difficult to find one individual prepared to meet the manifold demands of modern times for

all phases of the practice of law. As in the case of the law, or of accounting, these requirements are most likely to be found in an organization made up of men of specialized capabilities, working as a unit.

XXI

THE NEW BUSINESS HORIZON AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

CONFLICT of ideas is rooted in human nature. It is an essential condition of human progress.

It may express itself by the method of force—physical, economical or financial. Or it may employ the method of adjudication, reason and understanding.

Today, the values of the first are doubted. The glories of war are tarnished. Business as a bitter battle is out-moded in an era when the profit motive is no longer the sole law of

business. *Caveat emptor* is a discredited slogan.

The world and society have come to understand that conflict has a better basis of settlement—more economical, permanent and judicious—the basis of reason and understanding.

Conflict ends where understanding begins. Understanding is the foundation of favorable public opinion.

Understanding, to be complete, well-rounded, requires advocacy—the presentation of all phases of the conflict in question.

In a world which is interlaced with numerous and complex means for the communication of ideas, advocacy is no longer the simple process it was in the days of the Lincoln-Douglas debates.

Advocacy today must be based on a com-

plete knowledge of the mechanics of communication of ideas. It must conform to professional standards. It must operate on a background of consistent understanding of the accepted and current public conception of ethics.

Out of this situation has come, during the past quarter century, a new profession: the public relations counsel.

Like every new profession, it has had its vicissitudes. For long it operated under the cloud of indirect dealing. It did not realize for many years the full scope of its field, the instruments of its work or the principles upon which it should operate.

Too often it has been turned to as a means of escape from a troubled situation, and not as one turns to a doctor who corrects organic difficulties by treatments which go to the root of the illness.

Today the profession follows ethical standards. It works upon a sound foundation of knowledge and technique.

It deals with intangible public opinion which is the outgrowth of human conduct. It has as its task the measurement of accepted standards of human conduct, and then the practical application of those standards to an idea, an individual, an institution or a corporation.

Public relations counsel may function as a corrective, by bringing ideas or institutions into adjustment with prevailing standards of human conduct. It may function as a preventive, by sensing the trend of standards of human conduct and adjusting ideas or institutions to those trends before they become fully accepted.

Public relations counsel appears as an advocate at the bar of public opinion.

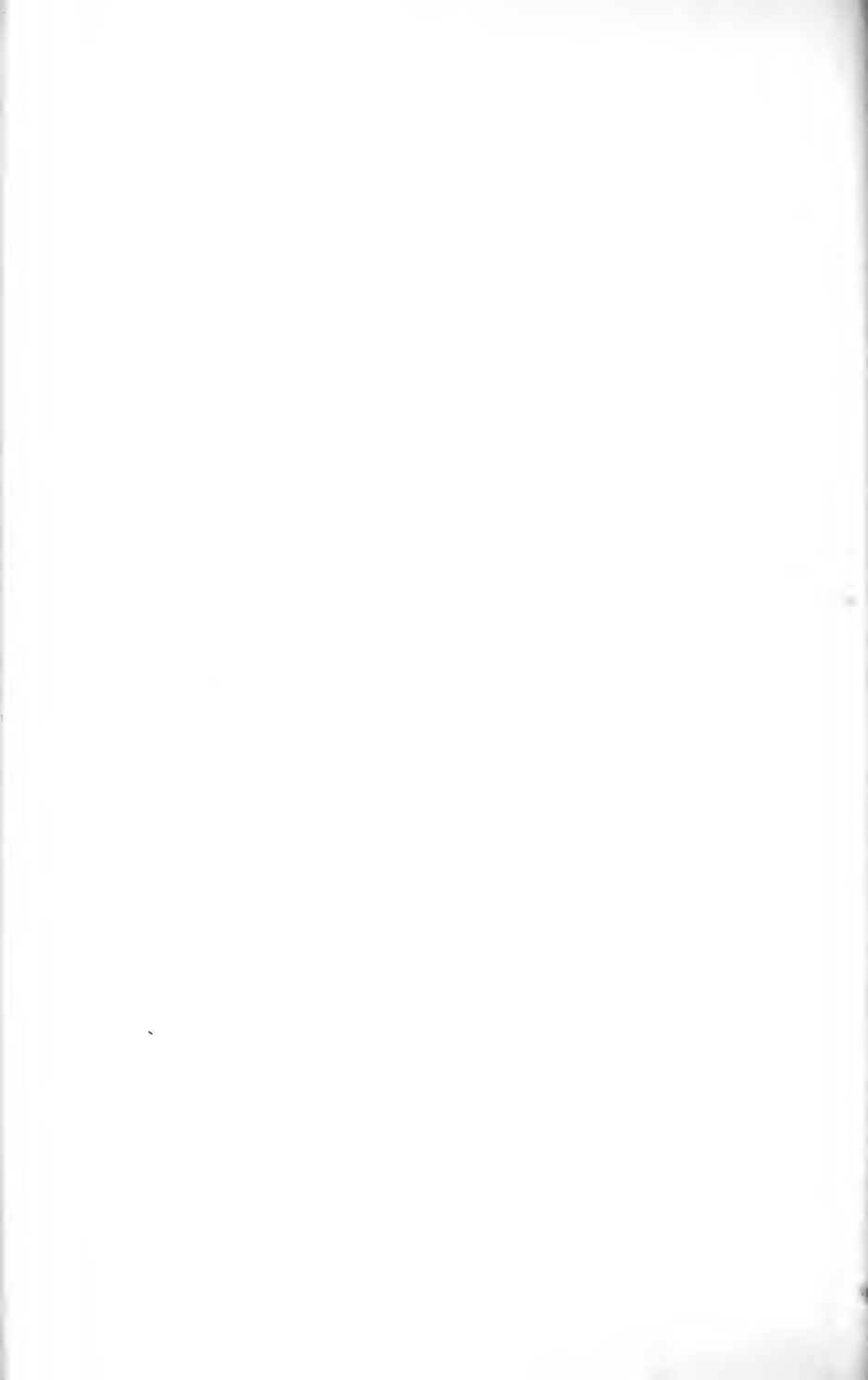
Its advocacy is as ethical and dignified as the profession of the law.

Through such advocacy comes better understanding, upon which progress is built.

Public relations counsel, in the achievement of understanding and progress, contributes social values as well as commercial values to the conduct of affairs.

Today the profession of public relations is utilized increasingly by the far-seeing in keeping step with progress. Tomorrow it will be as commonly accepted as medicine and the law in a world which acknowledges that private enterprise is public enterprise and must be conducted in the public interest.

In preparation: "The Strategy of Publicity as
Founded on Sound Public Relations," by John
Price Jones.



APPENDIX

A Plan for Conducting a Public Opinion Poll

ANY plan for conducting a public opinion poll must take into consideration the distinction between market research and the testing of public opinion.

Market research has to do with the study of logical sources of product consumption, whereas a public opinion test involves the determination of the general public's reaction to company policies and products. The field of market research is limited; the field for a public opinion survey is representative. The lines of both types of studies cross, and

should cross, in a large proportion of cases, but the public opinion survey plumbs beyond the mere market to the depths of a representative cross-section.

The purpose of the plan outlined here is to suggest a means of sampling public reaction to the policies and products of a business institution. The plan is divided into two parts: the first indicating a method of sampling public opinion on a nation-wide basis; and the second part, comprising a plan for testing local reaction.

THE THEORY OF A NATIONAL POLL. The theory of a national poll is that, through a representative sampling of basic social groups, an accurate picture of public opinion can be obtained. This theory has been applied with remarkable results in the case of polls on political and social issues. There is

every reason to believe that it is applicable to a national poll of public reaction to a business institution.

THE VOTE-SAMPLE. In order to test public opinion accurately, and within reasonable cost limits, it is of first importance to determine the smallest possible percentage of representation within basic social groups which will provide a true test of public reaction. This cannot be done haphazardly but must depend on an analysis of population statistics, by states, relating to sex, residence, income and age groups. Accurate percentage representation from each of these groups is necessary in obtaining the true picture desired. Each representative of each of these groups is termed a vote-sample.

OBTAINING THE VOTE-SAMPLE. In a nation-wide study, the state is the unit to be used in the selection of vote-samples. The first analytical step is to take the population statistics for each state for men and women of age 15 and over. Using these two figures as the bases of two computation columns, each figure is then divided into the number of urban, rural-farm and rural-non-farm residents. The total male and total female population figures are then divided into income groups and again by age groups. Percentages of the total male and female population are then computed within each classification group.

The next step is to determine what percentage of the total population of the country is to be sampled. A sampling of one for every 10,000 of population would provide approximately a 13,000 cross-section,

which would be both conceivably representative and comparatively inexpensive to handle.

When this percentage is decided upon, the total number of vote-samples to be obtained from each state is then computed. The number of samples to be obtained from each classification is then determined on the basis of the percentages already arrived at. Each classification includes each other classification; that is, the percentage number of samples in each age group are to be applied to the income group classification and again to the residence classification.

Exhibit One—attached—shows this analysis worked out for the State of California, as an example.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE. When vote-sample requirements have been worked out for each

state, the next step is to prepare the questionnaire. These points should be considered: What is the purpose of the public opinion poll? What questions will answer this purpose? How will the information derived be tabulated and interpreted? Questions should be phrased in simple and direct language so that there is no possibility of confusion of meaning. It should also be remembered that a large percentage of the persons responding to the questionnaire will be of less than average intelligence and questions must therefore be scaled to this level. Generally speaking, not more than five questions should be included, other than the vote-sample information recorded by the interviewer.

A small, representative test of the questionnaire should be made before final printing is authorized. If index bristol stock, size 4" x 6" is used, questionnaires can be easily

handled by the interviewer and can be filed when returned.

One side of the card would bear vote-sample information and the other side would be for the questions.

READING THE VOTE-SAMPLE. The vote-sample should be made entirely by personal interview. The old method of mailed questionnaires has proved both inaccurate and costly, in that a large number of questionnaires must be mailed to obtain the desired return. A much more understandable reply is received when a trained interviewer makes the contact, records the information and returns the questionnaire to headquarters.

THE INTERVIEWER. The interviewer in a public opinion poll is most important to the

success of the survey. Interviewers should be carefully selected, trained and controlled. There should be one interviewer for every ten vote-samples in each state. Each state will have a head interviewer who will be responsible for the selection, training and control of interviewers in his state. He will make all vote-sample selections, assign them to his interviewers, collect responses and forward them to headquarters.

SOURCES OF INTERVIEWERS. The foremost requirement for an interviewer is that he or she shall be entirely impartial. Persons in any way connected with the business institution should not be used in this capacity. Sources frequently used include teachers, professional people, college graduates or undergraduates recommended by college placement agencies, local newspaper report-

ers, social service workers and ministers. These groups are normally the most intelligently unbiased and can be obtained for volunteer or part-time paid work. If care is given to the selection of the head interviewer, little trouble should be encountered in the enlistment of his helpers.

HEADQUARTERS ORGANIZATION. A separate headquarters should be set up for the conduct of the poll. The key headquarters representatives would include a director, having full responsibility for all operations of the poll, a field director, in charge of interviewer control and coordination, a research director, in charge of vote-sample requirements, questionnaires, tabulation and interpretation, and a list director, responsible for the mechanical details of listing and tabulation.

A STOCKHOLDER AND EMPLOYEE POLL. In most instances, a stockholder and employee poll should be conducted possibly simultaneously with the public poll. The same vote-sample classifications as outlined above could be used in this case, with the additions for stockholders of a "size of holdings" category, and for employees of a "company position" category. It should be remembered, however, that stockholders and employees hold biased relationship to the company, and the real value in this poll would be in the benefits derived from comparison of responses with the public opinion poll replies.

A Local Poll

THE THEORY OF A LOCAL POLL. The plan as outlined for a national poll can be applied also to a local poll. The testing units are dif-

ferent—states for a national poll, and boroughs or districts for a local poll—but, providing a careful analysis of representative groups is made, the same method relating to the testing of public opinion holds true for both.

THE VOTE-SAMPLE. Taking New York City as an example for a local poll, the same sampling procedure is followed as in the national poll. Here, the borough is the testing unit instead of the state and vote-sample requirements are computed to obtain true representation within these units. Urban and rural residence is not a factor here—the borough break-down replacing this classification.

See Exhibit Two.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE. The questionnaire, though it might be slightly altered to fit a more compact society, would also be substantially the same as for a national poll.

THE INTERVIEW. The means of reaching the vote-sample, the sources of interviewers and the control of these activities are also comparable to the national poll procedure, with borough head interviewers replacing state head interviewers.

HEADQUARTERS ORGANIZATION. No substantial alteration of the headquarters organization described above would be required.

It should be re-emphasized that the Plan outlined here is designed to sample a cross-section of general public opinion on a rep-

representative basis. Certain alterations would be required if only selected groups of opinion were to be sampled. For a true picture, however, of the way the general public thinks in respect to the policies and products of a business institution, it is believed that this Plan will provide a workable line of action.

EXHIBIT ONE

Vote-Sample Requirements

State: CALIFORNIA

Total population (age 15 and over) 4,382,364

Number of persons to be interviewed (1 for every 10,000) 438

Classification	MEN			WOMEN		
	Popu- lation	Per Cent	To be Inter- viewed	Popu- lation	Per Cent	To be Inter- viewed
1. Population	2,270,064	51.8	227	2,112,300	48.2	211
2. Residence						
Urban	1,663,957	73.3	166	1,548,315	73.3	155
Rural-farm	230,136	10.1	23	217,123	10.1	21
Rural-non-farm	374,825	16.5	38	348,775	16.5	35
			227			211
3. Income Group						
\$ 5,000 or less	2,244,045	98.85	214	2,106,118	99.7	207
5,000-10,000	19,036	.84	5	4,523	.23	2
10,000-25,000	5,368	.24	3	1,277	.06	1
25,000-50,000	1,121	.05	2	266	.01	1
50,000-100,000	396	.017	2	93		
100,000 or over	98	.003	1			
			227			211
4. Age Group						
15-24	468,174	20.6	46	435,637	20.6	43
25-34	506,963	22.3	51	471,730	22.3	48
35-44	482,837	21.3	49	449,282	21.3	46
45-54	375,563	16.6	39	349,463	16.6	36
55-64	239,757	10.6	24	223,094	10.6	23
65-74	136,394	6.0	13	126,916	6.0	12
75 and over	53,258	2.3		49,557	2.3	3
			227			211

EXHIBIT TWO

Vote-Sample Requirements

Locality: NEW YORK CITY

Total population (age 15 and over) 5,242,262

Number of persons to be interviewed (1 for every 1,000) 5,242

<i>Classification</i>	<i>MEN</i>			<i>WOMEN</i>		
	<i>Popu- lation</i>	<i>Per Cent</i>	<i>To be Inter- viewed</i>	<i>Popu- lation</i>	<i>Per Cent</i>	<i>To be Inter- viewed</i>
1. <i>Population</i>	2,618,473	49.7	2,605	2,623,789	50.3	2,637
2. <i>Borough</i>						
Manhattan	751,645	23.6	624	743,605	22.8	631
Bronx	468,337	19.1	507	477,574	19.3	516
Brooklyn	941,029	37.8	956	942,458	37.9	962
Queens	398,282	17.2	456	405,985	18.0	472
Richmond	59,180	2.3	62	54,167	2.0	56
			2,605			2,637
3. <i>Income Group</i>						
\$ 5,000 or less	2,573,784	98.3	2,560	2,613,309	99.6	2,626
5,000-10,000	28,286	1.1	29	6,634	.21	6
10,000-25,000	12,207	.45	11	2,863	.10	3
25,000-50,000	2,901	.11	3	680	.05	1
50,000-100,000	958	.03	1	224	.025	1
100,000 and over	337	.01	1	79	.015	
			2,605			2,637
4. <i>Age Group</i>						
15-24	621,474	23.7	617	665,229	25.3	667
25-34	669,133	25.6	667	676,427	25.8	681
35-44	592,727	22.7	592	547,109	20.8	549
45-54	394,946	15.2	396	368,924	14.0	369
55-64	215,622	8.3	216	221,182	8.4	222
65-74	96,317	3.6	94	108,366	4.2	111
75 and over	25,243	.9	23	34,576	1.5	38
			2,605			2,637













Fr. M. M. M.

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